



## NEWS RELEASE

Wednesday September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012

### Ash Trees Dying

The Sterling City Tree Board is taking early action to prepare for the arrival of an insect that most likely will kill the majority of ash trees in the Sterling area. The emerald ash borer, known as EAB, is a small (1/2 inch long, 1/8 in wide) metallic green beetle native to Asia. The larvae stage is spent feeding under the bark of the tree, creating channels, known as galleries, which restrict the tree's circulatory system. The borer eventually girdles and kills the tree.

EAB was discovered in southeastern Michigan in 2002 and has since spread through Quebec, Connecticut, Minnesota, New York, Virginia, West Virginia, Wisconsin, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Ohio, Kentucky, and Tennessee. Since the first discovery of EAB, millions of ash trees have died. EAB was first discovered in Illinois in 2006 and has devastated the ash tree population, resulting many times with a 90% loss, as it has tracked across northern Illinois. As a result of the invasion, shipments of ash nursery trees and ash logs with bark are now regulated, and transporting firewood outside of a quarantined area is illegal.

The Sterling City Tree Board is taking a proactive approach to informing residents of the issues that will be associated with EAB before the effects are seen in Whiteside County. The City Tree Board has joined forces with Emily Hanson, Illinois Urban Forestry Volunteer Coordinator, to organize an ash tree tagging program in the City of Sterling along right of ways. The program is being conducted by the Sauk Valley Community College Men's Baseball Team and will involve a survey of the ash trees located on the City's right of way.

A training seminar on EAB will be held Tuesday September 25<sup>th</sup> at 3:30pm in the City Hall Annex, 20 W 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, for the volunteers and general public to learn more about EAB and how to identify ash trees. A portion of the seminar will be held outside and will allow participants to be more familiar with how to identify ash trees.

A survey of ash trees on City right of way will be conducted on Saturday, September 29<sup>th</sup>; beginning at 8:00 a.m. to around 4p.m. Volunteers, wearing their red SVCC Men's Baseball Team t-shirts, will leave from the City Hall Annex after receiving instructions. Survey volunteers will be given a map of the City in which

## City of Sterling, Illinois

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they will record any ash tree found on the City's right of way. Ash trees will be tagged with a ribbon and an informational card describing EAB.

The training seminar and tagging program will help residents better understand EAB, treatment and removals on private property as well as right of ways. It is also important for the City to have a better understanding of the number and location of the existing ash trees on right of way. This survey is a first step in allowing the City to better plan on ways it may treat or remove a large influx of trees affected by EAB on right of ways.

For more information on the event, please contact the Assistant to the City Manager, Hadley Skeffington-Vos at [hskeffington-vos@sterling-il.gov](mailto:hskeffington-vos@sterling-il.gov). For further information on EAB, please check out [www.emeraldashborer.info](http://www.emeraldashborer.info).

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